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# Press Release

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## ***Alan Wapner sworn in as SCAG President; gears up to lead development of long-term regional transportation plan***

**Indian Wells, Calif.** – Ontario Mayor pro Tem Alan D. Wapner was sworn in Thursday as President of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), stressing the need for additional dollars to fund transportation improvements and enhance the quality of life in one of the fastest-growing regions in the country.

Wapner, who also serves as President of the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority and the Ontario International Airport Authority, has helped drive SCAG's three most recent Regional Transportation Plans and is a leading voice on the relationship between transportation, economic opportunity and livability.

"We're a region of 19 million people on the fast track toward 23-24 million," Wapner said of the six counties and 191 cities that comprise SCAG, the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization. "Making sure we have the infrastructure in place to manage that kind of growth is a critical issue that can no longer be pushed aside by those at the state and federal level who rely on us as an economic driver. The good news is the needle is moving; it's just not moving fast enough."

Wapner cited Ontario's recent award of \$35 million in Transformative Climate Communities funding under the state's cap-and-trade program. Until then, Southern California had been largely shut out of the greenhouse gas-reduction program, despite representing 48 percent of the state's population.

Wapner stresses that as the only venue in Southern California that has the ability to unite all of the counties and cities, SCAG has a responsibility to assure that all transportation projects connect and provide a network that is interoperable.

"I look forward to SCAG serving as a center of collaboration and facilitation to provide connectivity for transportation, environmental and housing plans for the communities it serves," said Wapner.

"Transportation is about so much more than mobility. It connects us as a region, creates economic and employment opportunities, and has a direct impact on the health and well-being of our communities," Wapner said.

During Wapner's one-year term as president, SCAG will begin developing its 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) – a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental and public health goals.

Key elements of the plan are likely to include:



- How to incentivize the use of public and alternative forms of transportation. Recent studies show that the SCAG region added 2.1 million vehicles between 2000 and 2015, and that the average Los Angeles resident now wastes over 100 hours per year in traffic.
- The growing popularity of active transportation, and how to encourage greater bicycle and pedestrian safety. In recent years, SCAG has been at the forefront of this effort through its Go Human advertising and public engagement campaign.
- The impact of land-use decisions on commuter patterns, air quality and community health.
- Preserving Southern California's role as a global trade gateway. SCAG research has shown that one-third of all jobs and economic activity in the six counties are connected – directly and indirectly – to freight and goods movement.

"Southern California's transportation system is at a critical juncture. The planning we do now will determine how we advance as a region and the opportunities that lie ahead for our children and grandchildren," Wapner said.

Wapner's swearing in took place on the first full day of SCAG's 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Regional Conference and General Assembly in Indian Wells.

He has been a member of the Ontario City Council for nearly 24 years, and a resident of the city for more than 35 years. As a representative on SCAG's Regional Council, he has chaired the Transportation Committee, Audit Committee and the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee.

Wapner had a leading role in regaining local control of the Ontario International Airport, and as President of the Airport Authority, he has overseen a resurgence in passenger and cargo traffic, the arrival of trans-Pacific flights and the return of JetBlue.

A retired police sergeant of the City of Ontario and an Ontario business owner, Wapner graduated from the University of Southern California, where he received his bachelor of arts degree. He received his Law Degree from Whittier College School of Law.

Wapner and his wife, Judi, have five children and three grandchildren.

In addition to Wapner, other SCAG officers sworn in on Thursday were First Vice President William "Bill" Jahn, Mayor of Big Bear Lake, and Second Vice President Randon Lane, a City Council member for Murrieta. Margaret Finlay, a Duarte City council member, will remain on SCAG's Executive Committee as Past President.

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### **About SCAG**

SCAG is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG's regional efforts, please visit [www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov).